

Section

1

Overview

The East Mountain Area is a beautiful and serene place where residents value the rural quality of life.

The East Mountain Area encompasses approximately 210,000 acres of eastern Bernalillo County including the Sandia, Manzanita, and Manzano mountain ranges. The mountains, owned and managed by the National Forest Service, provide the area with scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, and diverse recreational opportunities. These characteristics along with quietness, low-population density, limited vehicle traffic, and neighborhood-scale businesses define the rural character of the area.

From Vision to Policy

In a rural area, a healthy, natural ecosystem dominates the landscape, and development is limited and not easily seen from most roadways. Residential land is most often purchased and built on individually by various local builders rather than mass-produced in tract developments assembled by a single enterprise. The following is a summary of the recommendations, goals, and policies that are found in the Action Plan section.

LAND USE

The rural character of the East Mountain Area is very important to its residents. The East Mountain Area community acknowledges and is concerned that the area's rural character is vulnerable to change. The goals below reflect this concern and strive to guide the type and intensity of development in order to minimize the negative impacts on rural character.

Goals Overview:

- Promote appropriate development patterns
- Protect property rights and the health, safety, and welfare of all
- Maintain a network of publicly accessible facilities, parks, trails and open spaces

Policies Overview:

- Guide subdivision, development and land uses in accordance to physical suitability of the land, existing development patterns, the capacity of established and planned public facilities, and projected housing demand in order to prevent environmental degradation.
- Require light crop production, home gardening, sustainable agriculture, animal husbandry, and commercial activities to be of an appropriate scale to meet the needs of the area residents and located where they do not conflict with other resources and where they are consistent with environmental conditions.
- Establishment of sector plans would provide specific zoning requirements for designated areas.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Issues of great importance to the East Mountain Area are water availability, fire danger, wildlife permanence, visual open space, and clean air.

Goals Overview:

- Promote preservation of the natural environment to maintain rural character, protect the watershed, control erosion, facilitate drainage, reduce air pollution, and conserve the viewshed.

Policies Overview:

- Require development proposals to indicate environmentally sensitive factors
- Encourage protection of soils and native vegetation and re-vegetation using native plants and materials that blend with the natural setting.
- Consider public acquisition of or other methods to preserve desirable open space properties and trail corridors.
- Adherence to the current Bernalillo County EH Office Well Ordinance and Waste Water Ordinance 2000-7 or most current ordinances. As conditions change and necessity justifies changing the current ordinances, Bernalillo County EH Office will prepare and/or update ordinances governing the approval and construction of individual and community waste water systems to be in compliance with the East Mountain Area Plan and other applicable County plans.

- Prepare and/or update design, construction standards and procedures, process for the review and approval for community water and waste water systems, effluent quality and monitoring for community waste water systems, and individual water wells.
- Require all new subdivisions to analyze the effects of the development upon the groundwater supply over a 100-year period (prepared by a Hydrogeologist or Groundwater Hydrologist).
- Provide the public with educational information about conventional and alternative water and waste water systems.
- Require developers for all new developments of 25 dwelling units or more, to provide a connection to a regulated sewer system; or a centralized waste water treatment facility with a discharge plan or an approved alternative waste water systems; or a conventional waste water system that meets the requirements specified in the most current Bernalillo County Waste Water Ordinance 2000-7; *and* an acceptable and approved hydro-geologic report.
- Prepare a water and infrastructure study and develop a waste water services options analysis for the East Mountain Area.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

East Mountain Area residents and visitors have varying degrees of needs for infrastructure, facilities, and amenities.

Goals Overview:

- Provide housing and job opportunities, educational and recreational facilities, amenities and infrastructure

Policies Overview:

- Prepare an economic development plan
- Make accessible and available to area residents, public parks, trails, open space, educational facilities, other amenities, and related programs.
- Require all new proposed developments to indicate the level of need for Public Safety facilities and include a fire mitigation plan.
- Bernalillo County Public works Department shall pursue methods to gravel and maintain all appropriate high traffic roadways in the East Mountain Area to reduce dust and air pollution.
- Improved and maintained the primary intra-mountain circulation network to provide safe, efficient year-round access.
- Maintain secondary circulation routes as rural roadways providing alternative north-south connections from I-40 to the residential development to the north.
- Initiate economic development planning to examine appropriate locations and opportunities for business and light industry compatible with area's rural character.
- Ensure that the local and regional road circulation network is providing access to all residential and recreation areas in the East Mountain Area.

In summary, the intention of this plan is to present the vision for the East Mountain Area, provide planning guidelines, and outline public and private actions that can be implemented to protect the resources that define the area's rural quality.

